

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-10 AID-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00

NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 OMB-01 SAJ-01 /066 W

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O 070834Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9254

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 2297

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT

SUBJECT: NCCC-K FINANCES AND DETENTION OF REV. KIM KWAN-SOK

REF: (A) STATE 77226; (B) SEOUL 2256

1. NCC-K SOURCES INFORMED EMBASSY THAT COUNCIL'S EFFORTS TO MEET WITH PRIME MINISTER ON APRIL 4 RE CHARGES OF MISUSE OF CHURCH FUNDS AND DETENTION OF REVS. KIM KWAN-SOK AND PARK HYONG-KYU AND FIVE OTHER CLERGYMEN AND NCCC-K STAFF MEMBERS FAILED. GROUP WAS ONLY ABLE TO TALK TO PRIMIN'S SECRETARY HAN SANG-KUK, WHO DISCOURAGED EXPECTATIONS OF CHURCH LEADERS THAT CASE NEGOTIABLE.

2. NCCC-K RECONVENED APRIL 5 AND ISSUED DECLARATION CHARGING THAT USE OF CHURCH FUNDS INTERNAL AFFAIR AND THAT INVESTIGATION AND CHARGES OF EMBEZZLEMENT AND MISUSE OF CHURCH FUNDS INTERFERENCE IN CHURCH AFFAIRS. COUNCIL EXPRESSED STRONG INDIGNATION THAT CHARGES HAD BEEN WIDELY PUBLISHED AND DISTORTED, THUS DEFAMING KIM KWAN-SOK AND COUNCIL. COUNCIL IS ALSO CONVINCED THAT REV. CHONG CHIN-YANG WHO FILED ORIGINAL COMPLAINT AND WHO HAS RECORD OF FILING SUITS AGAINST ANTI-ROKG CLERGYMEN IS GOVERNMENT AGENT AND HAS LENT HIMSELF TO FURTHER ROKG CAMPAIGN TO SUPPRESS CHURCHES. NCCC-K URGES ROKG TO END HARASSMENT, SURVEILLANCE AND OTHER ACTS INTERFERING WITH RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

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OF CHURCHES AND DEMANDS IMMEDIATE RELEASE OF CHURCHMEN

DETAINED AS WELL AS PUBLIC EXPLANATION WHICH WOULD REMOVE FALSE ONUS FROM THOSE DETAINED.

3. ROKG CHARGE DEALS WITH GIFT OF DM 203,000 (W 27 MILLION) FROM WEST GERMAN "BREAD FOR THE WORLD FOUNDATION" FOR ASSISTANCE TO URBAN POOR. CHURCH SOURCES ADMIT PRIVATELY THAT MONEY WENT TO STUDENTS, FAMILIES OF PRISONERS, AND OTHER NCCC-K SUPPORTED ACTIVITIES DEEMED BY ROKG AS POLITICAL. SINCE NEITHER GERMANS NOR CHURCH GROUPS REPORTEDLY BENEFICIARIES OF GIFTS HAVE MADE PUBLIC CHARGES, AND SINCE REV. KIM CONSIDERED BY ALL AS HONORABLE, CHARGES ARE VIEWED AS POLITICAL AND ROKG MOTIVATION ASCRIBED AS GESTURE OF RESENTMENT BECAUSE REV. KIM AND NCCC-K CONSIDERED MAJOR CHANNELS OF TORTURE STORIES AND CHARGES OF ROKG PERSECUTION OF CHURCHES TO U.S. AND JAPAN.

3. ROKG ACTION SOMEWHAT SURPRISING SINCE REV. KIM KNOWN TO HAVE PLAYED MODERATING ROLE ON CHURCH ACTIVISTS IN RECENT MONTHS AND HAD BEEN DELIBERATELY CAUTIOUS WHEN TALKING TO CODEL FRASER. THIS LATEST DEVELOPMENT AT TIME OF STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS AND ROKG CONFRONTATIONS WITH YONSEI AND SOGANG, TWO MAJOR CHURCH-SUPPORTED UNIVERSITIES, HAS GREATLY STRENGTHENED CHURCH OPPOSITION. REV. CHON SONG-CHON, NEW CHAIRMAN OF CBS FEELS THAT DESPITE REFERENDUM AND RECENT QUIESCENCE OF CHURCH OPPOSITION, PRESIDENT PARK FEELS INCREASINGLY INSECURE, FEARING THAT IN WAKE OF VIETNAM, OPPOSITION MAY FEEL THAT US SUPPORT FOR HIM AND KOREAN SECURITY WEAKENING THUS UNDERMINING PUBLIC CONFIDENCE IN HIM AND ENCOURAGING OPEN REBELLION AGAINST HIS LEADERSHIP. THIS VIEW SHARED ALSO BY OTHER CHRISTIAN LEADERS.

4. AS SUGGESTED REF (A) POL COUNS INFORMALPY MENTIONED KIM KWAN-SOK CASE TO MOFA AMERICAN AFFAIRS BUREAU DIRECTOR YI SANG-OK APRIL 7, POINTING OUT US CONGRESSIONAL AND PUBLIC INTEREST. YI NODDED, TOOK A FEW NOTES, BUT MADE NO COMMENT.
SNEIDER

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